

TREASURE

OUR

mississippi

COASTS

and

ESTUARIES

miles of coastline
359

coastal population in 2000
363,988

fy03 czma core (section 306)
funding
\$1,266,000

fy03 czma enhancements
(section 309) funding
\$92,000

fy03 coastal nonpoint
implementation
\$86,000

fy03 national estuarine research
reserve operations, education,
monitoring and stewardship
\$531,000

fy03 national estuarine research
reserve land acquisition and
construction
\$5,961,000

COASTAL MANAGEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI HINGES ON BALANCING THE NEEDS OF A GROWING COASTAL POPULATION, DRAWN BY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE SHIPBUILDING, OIL AND GAS, AND DOCK-SIDE GAMING INDUSTRIES, WITH THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES THAT GIVE THE COAST ITS BEAUTY AND ALLURE. THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT (CZMA) PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF MISSISSIPPI'S COASTAL AREAS.

THIS LAW, WHICH IS ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA), RECOGNIZES A NATIONAL INTEREST IN OUR COASTAL AND OCEAN AREAS. IT ALLOWS EACH STATE AND TERRITORY, NOT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO BALANCE CONSERVATION OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT WITH HUMAN USES THAT DEPEND ON COASTAL RESOURCES.

THE CZMA IN MISSISSIPPI

The CZMA establishes two programs to balance the use and protection of America's coasts. The Coastal Management Program gives states a flexible framework to address a broad range of community development, economic, and natural resource issues at the state and local level. The National Estuarine Research Reserve System protects key coastal areas for long-term scientific study, education, and resource stewardship.

Mississippi Coastal Management Program

Approved: 1980

Lead Agency: Department of Marine Resources

The Mississippi Coastal Program resolves conflicts over local uses of the coast. The five-member Commission on Marine Resources, appointed by the Governor, makes decisions on how best to use and protect Mississippi's coastal wetlands. The Department of Marine Resources administers the tidelands trust fund, whose proceeds are derived from leases of state-owned tidelands for private uses. The Department also manages an extensive network of coastal preserves, which are sensitive and/or pristine coastal land and water areas; is acquiring these properties with tidelands funds, wetlands mitigation funds, or other money as it becomes available; and is developing management plans for the system.



Mississippi's National Estuarine Research Reserve Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Designated: 1999

Lead Agency: Department of Marine Resources

The Grand Bay Reserve is one of a national network of coastal protected areas that conduct science, education, and stewardship. The reserve system is a partnership between NOAA and the states.

The Grand Bay Reserve is one of the most biologically productive estuarine ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico region, supporting several rare or endangered plant and animal species, numerous important marine fishery resources, diverse habitat types, and important archaeological sites. The Mississippi Secretary of State, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Mississippi State University, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the University of Southern Mississippi serve on the reserve's management board, providing a broad base of support for Reserve activities.

RESEARCH: The reserve has recently initiated monitoring and fellowship programs. Two universities promote research on the reserve. Research activities include survey and inventory work to develop a site profile for the reserve.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH: The reserve conducts coastal management workshops for environmental professionals and coastal decisionmakers. It is in the process of developing canoeing, kayaking and birding trails and signage. Staff is planning education programs to inventory species and teach community members about biodiversity in the bayou.

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

The Comprehensive Resource Management Plan, led by the Department of Marine Resources, is a collaborative planning strategy of over 70 agencies representing the stakeholders of the six lower counties of Mississippi. The current comprehensive planning effort provides a unique opportunity to proactively work together with the federal and state agencies, local governments, special interest groups, and the general public towards developing a common vision that reflects the interests of all parties. The Comprehensive Resource Management Plan is a partnership between NOAA, the Department of Marine Resources, other state agencies, and coastal county and municipal officials. It is a non-regulatory entity that provides geographic information systems equipment, data, and training to local officials to help them make better-informed land use and coastal resource protection decisions. The Comprehensive Resource Management Plan has hosted three very successful annual Conservation Development Conferences since April 2000.